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Science Teachers Aboard Research Ships (STARS) Program

Stepping on board a serious marine research vessel, the Thomas G. Thompson, for the first time was truly amazing. Still tied to the dock, it struck me that this is where real marine science is taking place! I soon found the common bond of scientists, educators, crew and officers working offshore for 5 days in April of 2013 made for a positive and educational experience far beyond anything I could imagine.



I have crossed oceans on "yachts," worked commercially on large cruise ships, and lived aboard for years, but the rare experience of working, living, sleeping, and yes, eating chow (a great cook and staff in the galley) was as good as it gets on a ship. --and what joy to soon have my sea legs returned aboard a true research ship!

This hands-on experience, lab work, deck work with plankton net, water sampling from the water column down to great depths, first time seeing live plankton under the microscope, and just beginning to understand the chemistry of our oceans is an experience every science teacher should have. Having "Captain" Jim Foley as our teacher/educator was simply outstanding in every way.



The sunrise, and sunsets at sea, the brilliant stars clear and amazing offshore, wind and wave, the gentle roll of a well-designed and - built research ship leaves a "print" and a deep impression on how I will try to communicate with my students.

With this new experience and knowledge, my challenge as an educator, now, is to simplify the hands-on science to be useful and understandable for "dock-side" lessons with the World Wide Voyage Organized by Polynesian Voyaging Society. In just a few months, the

Hokule'a and Hikianalia Hawaiian Voyaging canoes are casting off on a one year voyage through the Hawaiian Islands, followed by a 4 year voyage around the world. Marine science will be taking place on board the 72' escort canoe, Hikianalia. Now, with actual experience on a research ship, I hope to be a valuable crew/educator aboard and at dockside, stirring concern and malama (care) of our precious oceans.

Malalo Nui (thank you) for the opportunity to continue my own education!